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## ♦EDITORIAL NOTES.♦

Our readers are requested to make the following verbal corrections in the article of Professor Lyon published in the December Number. On page 104 in the sentence beginning "On any given ethical question," for "ethical" substitute "critical." On page 105 the "itinerancy of the wanderings" should read "the itinerary of the wanderings."

**The Use of Commentaries.**—How is a commentary to be used? Are commentaries generally used or abused? These are practical questions?

Some students use the commentary first; if any time remains, and this is seldom the case, they take a glance at the portion of Scripture which they persuade themselves that they have been studying. Some read the passage under consideration hastily, glance over the first lines of each paragraph in the commentary, and wonder why commentaries are so dry. Some go nervously from a word in the text to the comment upon it, or from the comment to the word, twisting and confusing various comments and different words. Some, though but a moment of time is at their disposal, decide absolutely upon many questions; if the commentator seems to hesitate, if he fails to present a positive solution, he is regarded as loose, and unworthy of confidence. Some, finding that various explanations have been offered in the case of a certain expression, conclude at once that it is not worth while to give much attention to the study of the Bible, about which there may be held such divergent views. Some have no regard whatever for the views propounded in a commentary, and seek to ascertain those views only that they may be able to adopt one which the commentary does not suggest. It is probably true that by nine persons out of ten the use of a commentary is rather an abuse.

But what is the commentary for? When? As often as there is need. How? By complementing and supplementing the knowledge of common sense of which the ordinary Bible student is supposed to be possessed. There is a use of commentaries which is worthy of consideration. Study the portion of Scripture *first* without assistance. Read it carefully, examining every word, if possible, in the original, at least in the translation. Read it a second time, marking the relation which exists between the sentences and parts of sentences. A third reading will throw much additional light upon the matter in hand. Now note those words or phrases which you do not seem perfectly to comprehend. And again, those words and phrases of the meaning of which you can obtain no satisfactory idea.

There are three elements, (1) that which you seem to understand; or (2) that which is more or less doubtful; (3) that which is entirely uncertain as to meaning. Now, but not until now, refer to the commentary, and see what solutions or explanations are suggested for those points of greatest difficulty. Weigh the views that are presented, and decide, with the light which you have, i. e., in view of all the circumstances, upon that which is the most satisfactory. Examine the remarks touching the questions which were partly but not entirely understood. Finally read over whatever else may be said in the commentary, and note everything suggested, which did not occur to you. Read over the passage with all the light which has thus been shed upon it. If you have several commentaries, pur-